

REMARKS

I. Introduction

Claims 28 to 56 are pending in the present application. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable, and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

II. Objection to the Drawings

As regards the objections to the drawings, while 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a) requires the drawings to show every feature of the specified in the claims, “conventional features disclosed in the description and claims . . . should be” -- but are not required to be -- “illustrated in the drawing” “where their detailed illustration is not essential for a proper understanding of the invention.” For method claims (such as claim 54), drawings are not even required under 35 U.S.C. § 113. Since a detailed illustration of the features mentioned in paragraph 1 of the Office Action is not essential for a proper understanding of the claimed subject matter, it is respectfully submitted that no detailed illustration of those features is required. Accordingly, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

III. Objections Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75

Regarding claims 45 and 46, it appears that the Office Action has failed to recognize that claim 46 refers to an intermediate circuit current whereas claim 45 refers to an intermediate circuit voltage. Thus, claims 45 and 46 fully comply with the requirements of 37 C.F.R. § 1.75.

Regarding claims 34 and 35, it appears that the Office Action has failed to recognize that claim 34 refers to an a.c. voltage whereas claim 35 refers to a three-phase a.c. network voltage. Thus, claims 34 and 35 fully comply with the requirements of 37 C.F.R. § 1.75.

In view of the foregoing, withdrawal of these objections is respectfully requested.

IV. Rejection of Claim 40 Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

Claim 40 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as allegedly indefinite. While Applicant does not necessarily agree with the merits of

the contentions set forth in the Office Action, to facilitate matters, claim 40 has been amended herein without prejudice to recite that a charging current is at least one of (a) influenceable by at least an electronic circuit breaker and (b) controllable by at least an electronic circuit breaker. Withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

V. Rejection of Claims 28 to 35, 38, 40 to 43 and 48 to 55 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 28 to 35, 38, 40 to 43 and 48 to 55 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,631,813 (“Ikeshita”). It is respectfully submitted that Ikeshita does not render unpatentable the present claims for at least the following reasons.

Claim 28 relates to a converter system and recites that the converter system includes, *inter alia*, a buffer module configured to store energy. As amended herein without prejudice, claim 28 recites that the buffer module is configured to be supplied with energy for periods of time when the intermediate circuit voltage exceeds a first critical value and an overall regenerative power of a first drive module exceeds a motive power of a second drive module to store the supplied energy, and to supply the stored energy to at least one drive module when a total motive power of the at least one drive module exceeds the regenerative power to power the corresponding electric motor. Independent claims 48 and 53 have been amended to include analogous features.

The Office Action contends that the smoothing electrolytic capacitor 7 of Ikeshita constitutes a buffer module. However, Ikeshita in no manner whatsoever disclose, or even suggest, that the smoothing electrolytic capacitor is configured to be supplied with energy for periods of time when an intermediate circuit voltage exceeds a first critical value and an overall regenerative power of a first drive module exceeds a motive power of a second drive module to store supplied energy, and to supply stored energy to at least one drive module when a total motive power of at least one drive module exceeds a regenerative power to power a corresponding electric motor. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Ikeshita plainly fails to disclose, or even suggest, all of the features included in independent claims 28, 48 and 53. Consequently, it is respectfully submitted that Ikeshita does not render unpatentable claims 28, 48 and 53.

In view of all of the foregoing, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

VI. Rejection of Claims 36, 37 and 44 to 47 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 36, 37 and 44 to 47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over the combination of Ikeshita and U.S. Patent No. 6,367,273 (“Takagi et al.”). It is respectfully submitted that the combination of Ikeshita and Takagi et al. does not render unpatentable the present claims for at least the following reasons.

Claims 36, 37 and 44 to 47 ultimately depend from claim 28 and therefore include all of the features included in claim 28. As more fully set forth above, Ikeshita does not render unpatentable claim 28. Takagi et al. does not cure the critical deficiencies noted above with respect to claim 28. As such, it is respectfully submitted that the combination of Ikeshita and Takagi et al. does not render unpatentable claims 36, 37 and 44 to 47, which ultimately depend from claim 28.

In view of all of the foregoing, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

VII. Allowed Claims 39 and 56

Applicant notes with appreciation the indication that claims 39 and 56 are allowed.

Conclusion

It is therefore respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable. All issues raised by the Examiner having been addressed, an early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: 

Clifford A. Ulrich
Reg. No. 42,194
KENYON & KENYON LLP
One Broadway
New York, New York 10004
(212) 425-7200
CUSTOMER NO. 26646